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SUBJECT: Guidance: Middle East Consultations, January 27

¶1. (U) This is an action request. USUN may draw from para two elements in making its intervention during Middle East consultations in the Security Council on January 27, 2010 and in answering subsequent press inquiries.

¶2. (SBU) Begin elements:

I thank Assistant Secretary General Fernandez-Taranco for his report.

Advancing the cause of comprehensive peace in the Middle East remains one of the United States' most important foreign policy endeavors. Our commitment to this goal is unwavering. Only through negotiations can this objective be realized, an approach we strongly encourage the international community to support.

The immediate and unconditional resumption of negotiations toward a two-state solution is the only realistic way forward. It is in the interests not only of the United States but of Israelis, Palestinians, and all of the region's people.

We call on all members of this Council to underscore this message publicly and with the parties. Waiting to resume talks benefits no one. The status quo does nothing to meet the legitimate needs of Israelis or Palestinians.

As Secretary of State Clinton has said, we believe that through good faith negotiations the parties can mutually agree on an outcome which ends the conflict and reconciles the Palestinian goal of an independent and viable state based on the 1967 lines, with agreed swaps, and the Israeli goal of a Jewish state with secure and recognized borders that reflect subsequent developments. Despite the difficulties and the complex political circumstances in the region, we are committed to re-launching negotiations, and to the cause of comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

National Security Advisor Jones and Special Envoy for Middle East Peace Mitchell both conducted talks in the region this month. Senator Mitchell also traveled to Europe to consult with the Quartet and other key partners, and high-level Egyptian and Jordanian delegations made helpful visits to Washington.

The Quartet has long called on all parties to uphold their Roadmap obligations. A freeze on settlement activity is an Israeli obligation under the Roadmap, and U.S. policy on this remains unchanged. We do not accept the legitimacy of continued Israeli settlements. That said, we also believe the settlement moratorium recently declared by the Israeli Government is a significant step that could have a meaningful effect on the ground.

U.S. policy on Jerusalem also remains unchanged. The status of Jerusalem and all other permanent status issues should be resolved through negotiations. We disagree with some Israeli actions in Jerusalem affecting Palestinians in areas such as housing, including the continuing pattern of evictions and demolitions of Palestinian homes. Neither party should take actions that could unilaterally pre-empt, or appear to pre-empt, negotiations.

The United States recognizes that Jerusalem is a deeply important issue for Israelis and Palestinians, and for Jews, Muslims and Christians around the world. We believe that through good faith negotiations the parties can agree on an outcome that realizes the aspirations of both parties for Jerusalem and safeguard its status for people around the world.

We call on the Palestinian Authority to fulfill its Roadmap obligations to ensure security, reform its institutions of governance, and refrain from any acts of incitement. In this regard, we express our strong concern that PA officials recently attended a ceremony commemorating Dalal Mughrabi, who was responsible for a terrorist attack that claimed the lives of many Israeli civilians.

We were pleased to see the letter from the Secretary-General reporting that his staff continues to work constructively with the Government of Israel on issues related to the Gaza Board of Inquiry, and to note that the financial issues have been resolved in a manner satisfactory to both Israel and the Secretariat.

At the same time, we call on Israel to reopen its border crossings with Gaza, with appropriate monitoring to address security concerns. This would allow for greater movement of people and humanitarian and reconstruction materials, consistent with UN Security Council Resolution 1860 and the 2005 Agreement on Movement and Access, thus alleviating the hardship and stress that civilians in Gaza face.

Hamas has yet to accept the principles established by the Quartet that are the building blocks of an independent Palestinian state--renunciation of violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Roadmap. Nor has it shown a greater interest in building a future for the Palestinian people than in its own violence and rhetoric. We are concerned as well about Hamas interference with international efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance in Gaza. And we call for the immediate release of Israeli Sergeant Gilad Shalit, abducted and held by Hamas since 2006.

A key component of international support for the Palestinian people comes via the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees - UNRWA. We thank Commissioner General Karen AbuZayd for her devoted service to UNRWA over the past nine years, and welcome the appointment of Filippo Grandi of Italy to this post, and of Margot Ellis of the United States to the post of Deputy Commissioner General.

The United States is UNRWA's largest single donor. In 2009 we provided over \$267 million, including over \$116 million to the General Fund. Unfortunately, the Fund still faces severe and chronic shortfalls, estimated at \$140 million for this year.

We appreciate the efforts of donors who have provided sizeable emergency support, but there is no substitute for predictable, annual contributions to the General Fund. As such, we welcome the renewed commitment of the Arab League, whose members have pledged collectively to provide UNRWA with no less than 7.8% of its General Fund. It is imperative that these pledges are

delivered.

On Lebanon, we thank General Graziano for his service with UNIFIL and welcome General Asarta, who begins his new assignment tomorrow. We recall as well the important contribution that all troop contributing countries are making to this vital effort. We call upon all parties to fulfill the provisions of Council resolutions 1559, 1680, and 1701.

[Contingency point on Goldstone: With respect to the Goldstone report, we look forward to the report the Secretary General will issue to the General Assembly next month, including information on the parties' investigations into alleged abuses.]

End elements.
CLINTON